CITY OF MESA HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB) Ad Hoc VETERANS TASK FORCE (VTF)

September 12, 2012 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT
Denise Heap
Rory Gilbert
Charmaine Hopkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT Lyn Buzuleciu

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Ms. Gilbert called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

2. Items from citizens present.

There were no citizens who requested to speak to the Ad Hoc Committee and Education Project Team.

3. Discuss, consider and recommend purpose and strategies of Veterans Task Force.

Ms. Heap discussed including first responders in the Veterans Task Force. Ms. Gilbert suggested that they ask sponsors if they want to include the first responders.

Ms. Hopkins suggested that the team and the community should reach out as a whole to veterans. Ms. Hopkins read information to the committee about the problems facing veterans when they return home. Over several decades the two problems remain the same: "Lack of understanding of what resources are available to returning service person and lack of adequate communication from the community on where these persons can go for assistance and support." Ms. Hopkins proposed three methods of delivery for information to veterans by: on-line, telephone and radio. Ms. Hopkins discussed the possibility of having booths at the Veteran's Day Celebration. Ms. Hopkins suggested checking with the City to determine if a contact for Veteran's Services already exists within the City so that we could make that information more accessible.

Ms. Gilbert suggested that the City of Mesa should have preferential hiring for veterans. Ms. Gilbert discussed the misperception of the community about veterans. Ms. Gilbert proposed education to the community along with veterans to combat the misperception. Ms. Gilbert suggested a mission statement would be: "Demonstrate our commitment to value and support veterans as a city." The committee agreed to propose the mission statement to the board for approval.

Ms. Hopkins suggested that the city should have a link for veterans on the city web site. The city currently has a link for senior citizens. Ms. Gilbert emailed Kathy McDonald for additional information regarding cities on service veteran's plan.

4. Discuss, consider and recommend potential task force members from outside organizations.

Ms. Gilbert suggested that they have organizations and a "neighborhood voice" out in the community to speak and help educate the community. Ms. Heap had a neighborhood contact that is a veteran, willing to help. Ms. Gilbert asked for task force members to be Mesa residents or working in Mesa.

5. Discuss future agenda items, meeting dates, announcements, other housekeeping.

The committee will meet again October 3, 2012 at 5:30pm. Ms. Hopkins made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Heap second the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.